Quantum of Flared Natural Gas

250. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of natural gas which is flared in the country daily;

(b) what is the value of the gas being flared daily;

(c) what is the share of NE Region in this flaring off gas; and

(d) the details of steps taken by Government to reduce gas flaring in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH SHARMA): (a) Currently around 4.4 MMSCMD of natural gas is being flared.

(b) The value of the gas being flared daily is around Rs. 55 lakhs.

(c) Around 1.2 MMSCMD is being flared in the North-East.

(d) Both ONGC and OIL are setting up the required compression and transportation facilities to reduce flaring to the technically minimum level.

Steps to improve functioning of Telephones of Calcutta

251. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:
SHRI MD. SALIM:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to improve the functioning of the Telephones of Calcutta; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir. Improvement in telephone and services is a continuous process.

(b) Calcutta telephone system has been considerably modernised by induction of Digital Switching and Transmission techniques since early 80s. At present more than 80% of the telephone exchanges are modern computer controlled systems. During the eighth plan period, all electro-mechanical exchanges, whose performance are not satisfactory, will be replaced by the latest generation digital switching systems. The external plant is being rehabilitated by induction of reliable media like digital microwave, optical fibre and ducted jelly filled cable. The customer Service Centres are being computerised. Constant efforts are made to upgrade the technical skills of operating staff by refresher training programmes.

Allotment of LPG Distributorships in Ahmedabad (Gujarat)

252. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of LP Gas distributorships had lately been terminated in and around Ahmedabad (Gujarat) for alleged malpractices by the owners and their 50,000 consumers arc facing acute hardship;

(b) whether a number of intending distributors have been interviewed by the Oil Selection Boards concerned and letters of intent have been issued to those selected; and

(c) if so, the reasons for delay in allotment of distributorships and how long it would take to finally grant the distributorship licences and to start distribution of LP Gas through them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) The following

distributors in and around Ahmedabad have been terminated during 1995:

1. M/s. Teela Gas Service.
2. M/s.Sabar Gas Service.
3. M/s. Gayatri Gas Service.
4. M/s. Harshida Gas Service.

Immediately on termination of these distributors, the customers attached to these distributors are being serviced by nearby distributors.

(b) and (c) 65 LPG distributorships have been included in the LPG Marketing Plan 1992—94 for Gujarat. LOIs for 43 LPG distributorships have been issued. 10 distributorships out of 43 have since started functioning. Actual commissioning of distributorships depends on many factors such as number of selections made by OSBs procurement of land by the allottees and obtaining of various licences etc. It generally takes about 1-2 years for commissioning of the distributorships from the date of issue of advertisement.

Plight of Indians in Fiji

253. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether reports are received on a regular basis from our Resident Mission in Suva on the plight of Indian settlers in Fiji;

(b) whether as a follow up of such reports or otherwise, Government have taken up the problems encountered by Indian settlers in Fiji with the Secretariat of the Commonwealth of Nations; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to raise the issue with the United Nations Human Rights Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) there is no Resident Mission representing India in Suva.

(b) and (c) Government of India has taken sustained action to bring the racial discrimination against Fijian nationals of Indian ethnic origin to the notice of the international community e.g., at Commonwealth Summits, sessions of the United Nations General Assembly and United Nations Human Rights Commission and other international fora. We have noted that the Government of Fiji has set up a Constitutional Review Commission and we hope that this will prepare the way for a constitutional arrangement that is democratic, just and non discriminatory and acceptable to all nationals of Fiji including those of Indian ethnic origin. We have also made clear our view that until the review leads to an outcome on these lines, it would not be appropriate to consider Fiji's re-entry into the Commonwealth. The Government of India is keeping track of the progress in constitutional reform in Fiji and we are awaiting the outcome of the deliberations of the Constitutional Review Commission. Government will take this into account in deciding whether and in what manner to raise this issue in the United, Nations Human Rights Commission.

Operation of Speed Post Service

254. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cities and towns which are connected by speed post service in the country;

(b) State-wise list of such cities and towns;

(c) the number of cities and towns which[1] will be covered by speed post service in each State, the details thereof;

(d) by when each district headquarter will be connected by speed post service; and

(e) whether there is any proposal to open speed post offices throughout the country; if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF